



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

## Statewide Registry of Animal Abusers Needed to Protect Pets and People

JAMES TEDISCO August 4, 2025

| ISSUE: **ANIMAL ABUSE, ANIMAL CRUELTY, COMPANION ANIMALS**

**Paw in hand** Pay in hand or type unknown

***By Senator Jim Tedisco***

*We have an obligation as a government to protect all members of our family, including those who have no voice: our companion animals.*

Unfortunately, there are some individuals who do not see the value of such life resulting in animal abuse, cruelty and neglect, which occur far too often, leading to unnecessary pain and suffering to animals.

Sadly, we're seeing brutal cases of animal cruelty and neglect again and again.

*I was proud to be the driving force behind passage of the landmark Buster's Law creating the felony category of "aggravated cruelty to animals," punishable by up to two years in prison and a \$5,000 fine.*

*While we've made positive steps since the passage of Buster's Law, there's still miles to go.*

Just the other week, the owner of "A Time for Paws" doggy daycare and boarding facility in Halfmoon was charged under Buster's Law with felony animal cruelty, as well as animal

neglect and felony criminal mischief for allegedly killing a French bulldog named Gus by leaving him out in the sweltering heat.

It's absolutely heartbreaking what happened to Gus and how the other dogs were treated at "A Time for Paws", which should have been providing them with the loving care they deserved, and their owners expected.

The Saratoga County Sheriff's Office under the leadership of Sheriff Michael Zurlo and Undersheriff Jeff Brown along with the Saratoga County District Attorney's Office and our animal control officers have done an incredible job of investigating and charging the owner with these terrible crimes.

*The extremely disturbing murder of Gus and the neglect and cruelty exhibited in this shocking case highlights the urgent need to strengthen our state's animal cruelty laws.*

I applaud the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors and Saratoga County District Attorney candidate Brett Eby for seeking to implement a county-wide registry of convicted animal abusers. Fulton County has recently implemented this registry as well.

While this county registry is a positive step in the right direction, **we need a holistic statewide registry of animal abusers as I am sponsoring bipartisan legislation for (S.1563)**, because an animal abuser can just go to a neighboring county that doesn't have its own registry to get an animal.

For example, if your cat has a litter, you should be able to check a statewide database to ensure the person who is adopting that kitten is not a convicted abuser. With a patchwork of county registries, you will not be able to tell.

Under my bipartisan legislation, the statewide animal abuse registry contains the names and addresses of persons convicted of animal abuse in New York State and makes it accessible to

the public and those involved in the sale or adoption of an animal (shelters, rescues and breeders) so they can refer to it before allowing an individual to take ownership of an animal.

I'm heartened that many animal rescues and shelters such as the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society have spoken up in support for my statewide animal abuse registry legislation.

I'm also sponsoring a bill to increase penalties for violating "Buster's Law" from the current two years in jail and a \$5,000 fine to **four years in prison and a \$10,000 fine (S.1205)**, banning those convicted of animal cruelty **from owning or possessing a companion animal and ensure abusers receive a psychiatric evaluation (S.1044)**, and making it an additional felony with **2 years in jail and a \$5,000 fine for harming a companion animal in the commission of another crime such as burglary known as "Kirby & Quigley's Law" (S.470)**.

These measures aren't just about protecting our pets, they're about keeping all members of our family safe from violence, as research indicates, violence against animals is a bridge crime that can, and has, led to violence against people.

*The FBI has animal cruelty as a top tier Group A offense in its crime reporting statistics due to it being a bridge crime.*

*A clear example of that is the individual who poured kerosene on Buster the cat in Schenectady that inspired passage of Buster's Law in 1999. This individual later was imprisoned for various crimes, including attempted rape, sexual abuse and unlawful imprisonment of a 12-year-old girl.*

Any person who would treat a dog like Gus the way they did would likely not hesitate to harm a human.

Having a companion animal is not a right, it's a privilege, but our pets and people have a right to be safe from abuse and neglect.

Let's get justice for Gus and all those animals who were harmed and abused by passing a statewide registry of animal abusers.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2025-S1563

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Requires each violator of "Buster's Law" to register with the division of criminal justice services

January 10, 2025

In Senate Committee [Agriculture](#)

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## 2025-S1205

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

[Increases certain penalties for violating the prohibition of animal fighting and for aggravated cruelty to animals](#)

January 08, 2025

In Senate Committee [Agriculture](#)

Do you support this bill?

## 2025-S1044

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Prohibits a person convicted of violating "Buster's Law" from owning or possessing a companion animal

January 07, 2025

In Senate Committee [Agriculture](#)

Sponsored by [James Tedisco](#)

NAY

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## 2025-S470

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Expands the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to a companion animal during the commission of a felony

December 31, 2024

In Senate Committee [Agriculture](#)

Sponsored by [James Tedisco](#)

Do you support this bill?

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